Secretary General Special Edition

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United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in Nepal



UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in Nepal. Photo: UNIC







Kathmandu 31 October 2008: I am delighted to be in Nepal, an important Member State of the UN and a country undergoing a remarkable political-social transformation through a home-grown peace process and national reconciliation. Well before I became Secretary-General I have watched with great interest the peace process that began to unfold in 2005 and its achievements. And since taking office I have given my full personal support to the work of the UN in support of the peace process.

I am proud that the UN has been a close partner in Nepal's development effort, in its struggle to end the 10-year conflict, in the fight to promote and defend human rights, and in the implementation of the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

I come to congratulate the people of Nepal for the remarkable historic progress they have made in establishing peace, and in particular, for the successful election of the Constituent Assembly in a largely peaceful process last April that has earned the admiration and respect of the entire international community. I come also to reaffirm the UN's firm commitment to continue to support the consolidation of peace and reform. Much has been accomplished, yet much also remains to be done. There are still numerous challenges to overcome. Although this is a short visit I am sure it will give a very good first-hand feel for the historic times the country is going through.

I thank Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal and the Government and people of Nepal for the kind invitation, and I look forward to having fruitful discussions with my hosts, including on how UNMIN and the rest of the UN family can contribute to the completion of the peace process and to longterm peace building and development.

Thank you very much.

UN News

The Secretary General opening remarks at the press conference



Members of the Media. Photo: UNIC



Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.
Photo: UNIC

Kathmandu 1 November 2008: Distinguished members of the media, Namaskar!

I am delighted to be in here today, to congratulate the people of Nepal, in person, for the remarkable historic progress they have made in establishing peace. I particularly want to commend the Nepalese people for the successful election of the Constituent Assembly in a largely peaceful process this past April that has earned the respect of the international community.

This trip is historic not only for me personally, but also because I have the privilege to be the first United Nations Secretary-General to visit the country since its Assembly was formed. And just prior to this press conference, I had the honour to be the first Secretary-General to address the Constituent Assembly and congratulate them again for the success. As mentioned in my speech earlier at the Constituent Assembly, the most immediate challenge ahead is to integrate and rehabilitate Maoist combatants. In this regard, I welcome the recent establishment of the special committee to supervise, integrate and rehabilitate Maoist army combatants.

I encourage the parties represented on the committee to ensure that it begins its important work as soon as possible. I also call on the Government to move quickly on the formal discharge of minors and disqualified combatants. The Assembly is proof of Nepal's remarkable progress and collective effort towards a new and better future. I, and the United Nations represented in Nepal by our political Mission UNMIN under the leadership of my Special Representative Mr. Ian Martin, are proud to be part of this historic change. As your partners, we are taking many concrete steps. The UN Peacebuilding Fund, for example, has released ten million dollars to the UN Peace Fund for Nepal. This money will finance local peacebuilding programmes. It will also help to reintegrate former combatants, generate youth employment and put other measures in place. I have been, and will continue to watch with great interest, the peace process and its achievements, and to pledge the UN's continued strong support. The concerted actions of the political parties together with civil society and ther stakeholders were vital in bringing about the uniquely Nepali-driven political and social transformation.

To that end, I encourage the parties to continue to work in a spirit of compromise and cooperation on drafting the new constitution, the future of the Maoist Army and other key peace-building initiatives. I am also here to offer my sincere thanks to Nepal, an important Member State of the United Nations, which has contributed so much to the organization. For more than 50 years, Nepal has contributed over sixty-thousand Nepali troops and police to serve in UN peacekeeping operations around the world. The United Nations greatly values Nepal's contribution to Peacekeeping operations as well as its continued and enhanced support.

I am proud that the UN has been a close partner in Nepal's development effort, in its struggle to end the 10-year conflict and to implement the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement. I am fully committed to the work of the United Nations in support of the peace process.

Nepal has come a long way, but the journey continues, as there are still a number of challenges to overcome. The people of Nepal have taken a stand for democracy and it would be especially inspiring for the entire world to see Nepal, which already makes such a tremendous difference in peacekeeping for others, overcome its own conflict and achieve lasting peace at home. Now, I'd be happy to take your questions.
Thank you very much!

UN News



Sam Taylor, AFP
Photo: UNIC

SAM TAYLOR, AFP: Secretary-General, after meeting the main political actors here, how convinced are you that the Maoists are totally committed to multiparty parliamentary democracy? Thank you.

SECRETARY-GENERAL: I have met all the political leaders, the important parties' leaders, and while I congratulated the historic transformation that they have achieved recently, I also urged them to overcome the differences in their positions. They should look beyond their party lines, and look to the future of their own country and people. And I urged and appealed to them that this special committee should be formed and launched as soon as possible, so that they can address these very important issues. And I'm convinced that they heard my appeal, and I hope sincerely that, on the occasion of my visit, they will be able to reconcile and start their work as mandated by their people.



H. H. Upadhyaya, Kantipur TV
Photo: UNIC

H. H. UPADHYAYA, KANTIPUR TV: As you have said in your statement – that the immediate challenge is the integration and rehabilitation of the Maoist combatants – as this has become a very crucial issue now, do you think that UNMIN should be provided a more active role in this regard, and have you had any talks regarding this with Prime Minister Dahal and other political leaders?

SECRETARY-GENERAL: This process of the special committee and democratization is driven by the Nepali people. The United Nations, led by UNMIN, will continue to persist and facilitate such a role for the Nepali Government and political leaders. And if they request any other information, then we can also provide some experiences and know-how of examples of other countries. But I would urge that the Nepali Government and political leaders cooperate among themselves, overcoming differences of position, in the spirit of compromise and flexibility and political leadership.

MAHESH ACHARYA, KANTIPUR RADIO: The Nepal Government policy document has vowed to complete Maoist army integration within six months. But many days have passed, unsubstantive, since the formation of the army integration special committee. Still there are major differences regarding the composition of the special committee. In this context, how feasible is it to see army integration completed within six months?

SECRETARY-GENERAL: That has been a very important part of my consultation with many political leaders, the Prime Minister and Government leaders. I sincerely hope, and I again urge all the political leaders and all Government leaders that they should work in a spirit of cooperation and compromise and also flexibility. They have come a long way until today. Now they should overcome these political party lines; they should walk a line of national unity, going beyond their differences of opinion. The people and political leaders of Nepal are going through a crucially important, historic period. Depending on what they will do, the coming few months will make a huge difference for the long-term future of Nepal and the Nepali people. The whole world and the United Nations are watching very closely, with a high level of expectations, as we have been watching closely during the peaceful election, and also during the very dramatic transformation from monarchy to federal republic. So please bear in mind all of the historic responsibilities that they have.

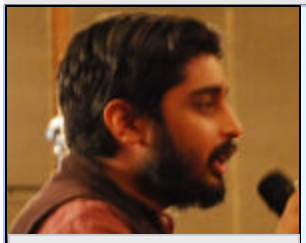


Manesh Shrestha, CNN
Photo: UNIC

MANESH SHRESTHA, CNN: During your visit to India, in your talks with authorities there, did Nepal figure in the talks? And if it did, what kind of talks did you have about UNMIN's continued presence in Nepal?

SECRETARY-GENERAL: I also had good discussions with Government and political leaders of India. Of course, one of the subjects of our discussions was the very encouraging, positive development of the situation in the subcontinent, including the one which has taken place in Nepal. We all appreciate the very encouraging development of the situation towards the democratization process here. We also agree that the international community, together with the United Nations, should fully cooperate and assist the Nepali Government and its people's very noble efforts to realize democratization in parallel with socio-economic development.

UN News



Prashant Jha, Himal Media
Photo: UNIC

PRASHANT JHA, HIMALMEDIA: What is going to be the UN's approach in dealing with the officers in the Nepal Army who have been implicated in human rights scandals? We have heard unofficial reports that that the UN has informally told the Nepal Army that it is not open to recruiting these officers for international peacekeeping operations. Could you confirm what is going to be the future approach?

SECRETARY-GENERAL: As I said, the United Nations is deeply grateful to the contribution of the Nepali Government to UN peacekeeping operations – you are the fifth-largest contributing country. Currently, one very distinguished Nepali general is now serving as a force commander in Sudan. We would welcome more contributions from the Nepal Government, but we would particularly welcome if they are nominated by the Nepal Government as peacekeepers to the UN peacekeeping operations; we would welcome it but, at the same time, those soldiers should be the part of Nepal's national army. This is the basic position and principle of UN peacekeeping operations– and there were many such cases, even in peacekeeping operations, in which even former rebels, when they were integrated into the national armies of Member States of the United Nations, were recruited as part of UN peacekeeping operations. So, therefore, integration of former combatants with the regular national army of Nepal, that would have to be decided and carried out by the Nepali Government. There is a standard criteria, and all peacekeepers need to meet this criteria and the standards of UN peacekeeping operations.

EDITOR, QUARTERLY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW: Your visit to Nepal was very important. We have had a dramatic change in Nepal, so we have a mass representation of women – 190 women. This is due to the contribution of Ian Martin and also the United Nations and the present leadership. So, the United Nations has given 10 million dollars. I think this is peanuts, because we have floods in the east and west. Are you, Ban Ki-moon – it has been mentioned that due to the fuel crisis we have a famine in the mountains; the transportation of food grains is very difficult. So I request your contribution, the United Nations Development Programme needs much more help for women's upliftment, because we have 33 percent women in the Parliament. I request you that.

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Thank you very much for your very valuable suggestions. In fact, gender equality, gender balance, gender empowerment is one of the top priorities of the United Nations, and also of myself as Secretary-General. You must have seen how much of a difference I have made since I became Secretary-General in the United Nations system, to have more women employed at senior positions. And also, I have seen women's participation and integration move into every level of Nepali society. But, as you said, I would hope there should be more such distinguished women participating in every level of your society. This is important not only for Nepal but for all balance, progress, prosperity, and to peace all around the world. The United Nations takes it to be very important, and we will carry on this very important principle of the agenda of women's empowerment in the future.



Shirish Pradhan, PTI
Photo: UNIC

SHIRISH PRADHAN, PTI: On army integration, the politically indoctrinated Maoist army is being integrated into the national army, and there are also reports that the Maoists want their deputy commander to be army chief of the combined army. So, don't you see a danger of Maoist takeover? And the Maoists are also talking about establishing a communist republic, so don't you see that as a threat to democracy?

SECRETARY-GENERAL: As I said, I think the integration of all the people for national unity is a very important policy, but who is to be integrated, how to be integrated, what to be integrated – that is what the Nepali Government and people should decide. As I said earlier, the United Nations will be ready to provide necessary information and support in your efforts to do that.

AKHILESH UPADHYAY, KATHMANDU POST: First of all, thank you for the visit, Your Excellency. My question is – I leave it to the political historians, ten years down the road, to decide how much difference UNMIN has made – but I can see, as a casual analyst, that it has made a difference in bringing the two warring parties together and taking the peace process forward. My question and concern is, as UNMIN begins to downsize, it's been a major political player in town. Don't you think such a large Mission, when it leaves, will leave behind a political vacuum that will have repercussions on the larger peace process while it is still at a very, very fragile stage? Thank you.

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Now, when UNMIN was established, there was a clear mandate, authorized by the UN Security Council, and a large part of that mandate, I think, has been fulfilled through this very successful democratic election, which

UN News

was held last April. And UNMIN has been supporting and facilitating and providing necessary know-how and experience and assistance through that. Now that you are going through this very important historic political peace process and transformation, I think in some other areas there may still be areas where UNMIN should continue to assist. I have discussed this matter about the future role of UNMIN with the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister and the President, and I understand that the Nepali Government wants to see the extension of the mandate of UNMIN for a certain period of time, which needs to be determined and discussed by the UN Security Council. I will continue to discuss this matter with the Nepali Government, and bring the positions of the Nepali Government to the Security Council for consultation. But at this time I believe that, for a certain period of time, the UN will have to continue to assist the peace process of Nepal, for peace and stability and the democratization process, as well as development projects in Nepal.

HARISHARAN LAMICHHANE, RADIO NEPAL: Let's say, as you mentioned in your statement, that there will be continued strong support to Nepal after the peace process comes to a logical conclusion. So, could you just specify, will there be any special package for Nepal, for its reconstruction as well as socio-economic development, in the coming days? Thank you very much.

SECRETARY-GENERAL: We will continue to discuss how the UN will support your very noble efforts. Even with the downsizing, or even with or without UNMIN in the future – after all, this process should be Nepal-driven, particularly when it comes to the peace process, and also reintegration, rehabilitation of former combatants. That should be driven by the Nepali Government and its people. But the United Nations has a broader responsibility, again, to help Nepal; as one of the landlocked countries and as one of the least-developed nations, the United Nations has a broader responsibility and role to play to help your Government and people so that you can have socio-economic development in the broader framework of the Millennium Development Goals. And we also have a broader responsibility to ensure that human rights are promoted and protected properly in Nepal. We will continue to be part of this process, and continue to be part of this assistance to the Nepali Government and people. Thank you very much. Dhanyabad.

The Secretary General remarks to the media At the birthplace of Lord Buddha



Secretary-General Visits Birthplace of Buddha

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon meets with some of the monks during his visit of the birthplace of Buddha.

Kathmandu 1 November 2008: The UN System in Nepal marked the 63rd Anniversary of the United Nations in the UN House amidst a programme in the morning of 24 October. The Chief Guest in the programme was Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Upendra Yadav. Also speaking on the occasion was UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Mr. Robert Piper and Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in Nepal Mr. Ian Martin. The video message of Secretary General Ban Ki-moon was also screened. Some 800 participants consisting of Nepali ministers, heads of constitutional bodies, diplomatic corps, donors, I/NGOs, civil societies, high officials of the security forces, media and the UN staff were present. There were 18 booths set up by various UN agencies to display their respective project activities in Nepal. A street drama depicting issues of poverty, development and conflict in Nepal was highly appreciated by the audience. Besides, four young students were awarded as outstanding speakers on the issue of youth and unemployment in a national school and college level debate contest. About 10 staff from various UN agencies were honored for their dedicated service ranging from over 20 years upto over 35 years.

I am awestruck by the beauty and profound significance of this site, the birthplace of the Lord Buddha. Being here, I am reminded of his amazing life journey from sheltered prince to founder of one of the world's great religions. And I am moved by his example of voluntarily leaving behind comfortable circumstances to confront the painful realities of life and to help others overcome them. Above all, as Secretary-General of the United Nations, I am all the more inspired to work for peace throughout the world. I sincerely hope that we can learn from his lessons, from his teachings and his philosophy to bring peace, stability, harmony, reconciliation and friendship among people of different beliefs, different religions and cultures. This is exactly what human beings should promote and pursue for a better world, a more peaceful, more prosperous world.

UN News

Secretary General address to the constituent assembly of Nepal



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon addresses the members of the Constituent Assembly of Nepal, as Subas Chandra Nembang, Chairman of the Constituent Assembly, listens.

Kathmandu, 1 November 2008

Your Excellency, Right Honourable Subas Chandra Nembang [Chairman of the Constituent Assembly of Nepal]

It is a great honour to be the first United Nations Secretary-General to address this Constituent Assembly. I offer sincere congratulations on the historic transformation your country has undergone and in which you have played such a key role. Let me also say at the outset how distressed I was at the loss of life caused by the devastating floods in August and September. United Nations agencies and the UN Mission here worked closely with the Nepal Red Cross to transport tonnes of relief supplies to people in need. The UN Country Team continues to help the Government in its ongoing relief and resettlement efforts. We are your partners, dedicated to your progress, safety and well-being.

Excellencies, The elections here in April allowed Nepal's people to speak, and they raised their voices for peace, development and change. This Assembly is the most inclusive legislative body in your country's history. When I look out across this hall, I see the rich diversity of Nepal's peoples and cultures. This Assembly is proof of your remarkable progress. Collectively, you have tremendous potential to realize the Nepalese people's hopes for a new and better future. All of you – and all of the people of Nepal – drove the peace process. The United Nations is proud to be part of this historic change. As your partners, we are taking many concrete steps. The UN Peacebuilding Fund, for example, has released ten million dollars to the UN Peace Fund for Nepal. This money will finance local peacebuilding programmes. It will also help to reintegrate former combatants, generate youth employment and put other measures in place.

When I met with Prime Minister Prachanda in New York recently, he said he wants Nepal to be a "model for peace" with UN assistance. That is a wonderful goal. It also means we must both shoulder significant responsibilities. I wish to assure you of my personal support and that of the entire United Nations system for Nepal's political, economic and social transition. As we do our part, I encourage you to do yours. Steady progress in the peace process will ensure international support. The most immediate challenge ahead is to integrate and rehabilitate Maoist combatants. In this regard, I welcome the recent establishment of the special committee to supervise, integrate and rehabilitate Maoist army combatants. I encourage the parties represented on the committee to ensure that it begins its important work as soon as possible. I also call on the Government to move quickly on the formal discharge of minors and disqualified combatants.

The women of Nepal have in many ways particularly borne the brunt of the conflict. I would like to pay a tribute to the many women across the country who have been working in numerous ways to consolidate peace. This process will be greatly strengthened by ensuring the fullest possible inclusion of women at all levels. Sustaining peace will also require efforts to heal the wounds of the conflict. That means clarifying the fate of those who disappeared and compensating victims. It means enabling the return of displaced persons to their homes. And it means undertaking an honest and inevitably painful acknowledgement of the truth of past human rights violations, and to end impunity. You must also draft a new constitution. This will be extremely difficult, but also extremely rewarding. The process will bring you to face to face with a number of contentious issues, such as state restructuring. You will have to create a federal state that empowers different ethnic groups while maintaining national unity. I hope that each of you will advance in a spirit of cooperation. Through dialogue, you can forge a shared vision. This is a tremendous opportunity to lay the foundation for a stable Nepal for generations to come. I urge you to give your grandchildren, and even their grandchildren, reason to look back with pride on your role in

UN News

Contd.. Secretary General address to the



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon waves to the members of the Constituent Assembly of Nepal, as Subas Chandra Nembang (right), Chairman of the Constituent Assembly, looks on.

your nation's history. You owe this to your people. They need to see improvements in governance. They need to feel the benefits of a peace dividend. They need better access to employment opportunities, health care and education. And they need it now, especially at a time of global financial crisis and dramatically higher prices for food and fuel. All over the world, the poorest of the poor are suffering from these interlinked crises. More people each day are being driven into poverty and hunger. Their voice must be heard, and their plight acknowledged. I am urging governments everywhere not to backslide on their commitments to reach the Millennium Development Goals and to address the problem of climate change. At this time of crisis, we have to take a long-range view. Our future will be secure only if we protect our planet and its most vulnerable people. I know that many Nepalis are facing hardships. There is literally and figuratively '"no fat" in Nepal to withstand any additional shocks, such as a drop in vital development assistance or remittances.

The UN Country Team is working with the Government to help the hungry now – and to achieve food security in the future. More broadly, I am convinced that the political transformation of Nepal can and must go hand-in-hand with social and economic transformation. These are like the two wings of a bird; both are needed for this country to soar. You have been through many tests. Each time, you have overcome your differences. This is the democratic process in action. I am confident that you can minimize potential rifts through dialogue and compromise.

I call on all parties in the coalition Government to maintain cohesion while continuing to work with parties outside the Government in a spirit of cooperation. The Nepali Congress Party has made invaluable contributions to the peace process, most recently in its lead role in the Interim Government. Now that it is the opposition party, I hope that it will continue participating in key decisions. This will help ensure success. At the same time, all parties to the peace agreement must honour their commitments. And all parties must respect the rules of democratic government and human rights. I call on the Government to continue its dialogue and consultation with all parties. And I want to stress that they, in turn, are accountable to the Nepali people in helping to complete and consolidate peace.

Distinguished Assembly Members,

In achieving peace at home, Nepal can draw on its ample experience with global engagement. For half a century, your country has played a leading role in the maintenance of international peace and security through UN peacekeeping. Over the past fifty years, you have contributed sixty thousand blue helmets to some forty peacekeeping missions. Today, Nepal is the world's fifth largest contributor of troops and police. And a Nepali is the Force Commander in the UN Mission in Sudan, one of our largest peacekeeping operations.

You have given us your best resources – your men and women. Some have sacrificed their very lives for the cause of peace under the United Nations flag. The bravery of one Nepali soldier is very fresh in my mind. In June 2005, Major Kabindra Jung Thapa was helping to escort a human rights team to a dangerous part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They were investigating mass rapes – one of the worst atrocities of the war there. When the team was leaving, hundreds of armed militia men surrounded the helicopters and started firing. Major Thapa made sure that every person got on safely. He was the last to board. Just as he got inside the helicopter, he was shot and killed. Major Thapa died protecting his comrades. He died protecting the cause of peace and human rights. He died protecting the United Nations.

In his valour, we can see the potential of all the people of Nepal to live up to Prime Minister Prachanda's vision of this country as a "model of peace." The people of Nepal have taken a stand for democracy. They yearn for a better life. Your role is to set Nepal on course for the more positive future they so richly deserve. I wish you every success in that mission.

Thank you very much.

Biography

Ban Ki-moon



UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. (File Photo)

Ban Ki-moon of the Republic of Korea, the eighth Secretary-General of the United Nations, brings to his post 37 years of service both in Government and on the global stage.

Career highlights

At the time of his election as Secretary-General, Mr. Ban was his country's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade. His long tenure with the Ministry included postings in New Delhi, Washington D.C. and Vienna, and responsibility for a variety of portfolios, including Foreign Policy Adviser to the President, Chief National Security Adviser to the President, Deputy Minister for Policy Planning and Director-General of American Affairs. Throughout this service, his guiding vision was that of a peaceful Korean peninsula, playing an expanding role for peace and prosperity in the region and the wider world.

Mr. Ban has long-standing ties with the United Nations, dating back to 1975, when he worked for the Foreign Ministry's United Nations Division. That work expanded over the years, with assignments as First Secretary at the Republic of Korea's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, Director of the United Nations Division at the Ministry's headquarters in Seoul and Ambassador to Vienna, during which time, in 1999, he served as Chairman of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization. In 2001-2002, as Chef de Cabinet during the Republic of Korea's presidency of the General Assembly, he facilitated the prompt adoption of the first resolution of the session, condemning the terrorist attacks of 11 September, and undertook a number of initiatives aimed at strengthening the Assembly's functioning, thereby helping to turn a session that started out in crisis and confusion into one in which a number of important reforms were adopted.

Mr. Ban has also been actively involved in issues relating to inter-Korean relations. In 1992, as Special Adviser to the Foreign Minister, he served as Vice-Chair of the South-North Joint Nuclear Control Commission following the adoption of the historic Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. In September 2005, as Foreign Minister, he played a leading role in bringing about another landmark agreement aimed at promoting peace and stability on the Korean peninsula with the adoption at the six-party talks of the Joint Statement on resolving the North Korean nuclear issue.

Education

Mr. Ban received a bachelor's degree in international relations from Seoul National University in 1970. In 1985, he earned a master's degree in public administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. In July 2008, Mr. Ban received an honorary Doctoral Degree from Seoul National University.

Prizes and awards

Mr. Ban has received numerous national and international prizes, medals and honours. In 1975, 1986 and again in 2006, he was awarded the Republic of Korea's Highest Order of Service Merit for service to his country. In April 2008, he was awarded the dignity of the “Grand-Croix de L'Ordre National” (Grand Cross of the National Order) in Burkina Faso, and in the same month received the “Grand Officier de L'Ordre National” (Grand Officer of the National Order) from the Government of Côte d'Ivoire.

Personal

Mr. Ban was born on 13 June 1944. He and his wife, Madam Yoo (Ban) Soon-taek, whom he met in high school in 1962, have one son and two daughters. In addition to Korean, Mr. Ban speaks English and French.

UN News

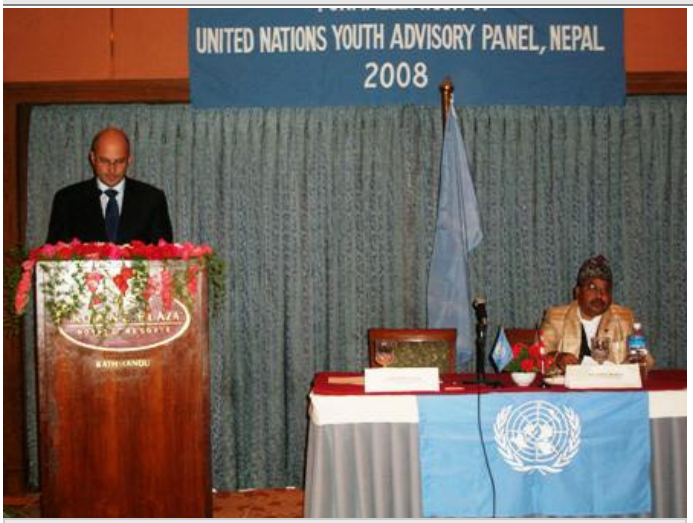
UN Day



Participants in UN Day 2008. Photo: UNIC

Kathmandu 24 October 2008: The UN System in Nepal marked the 63rd Anniversary of the United Nations in the UN House amidst a programme in the morning of 24 October. The Chief Guest in the programme was Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Upendra Yadav. Also speaking on the occasion was UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Mr. Robert Piper and Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in Nepal Mr. Ian Martin. The video message of Secretary General Ban Ki-moon was also screened. Some 800 participants consisting of Nepali ministers, heads of constitutional bodies, diplomatic corps, donors, I/NGOs, civil societies, high officials of the security forces, media and the UN staff were present. There were 18 booths set up by various UN agencies to display their respective project activities in Nepal. A street drama depicting issues of poverty, development and conflict in Nepal was highly appreciated by the audience. Besides, four young students were awarded as outstanding speakers on the issue of youth and unemployment in a national school and college level debate contest. About 10 staff from various UN agencies were honored for their dedicated service ranging from over 20 years upto over 35 years.

The launch of the UN Youth Advisory Panel in Nepal



UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Mr. Robert Piper and Honorable Minister for Youth and Sports Mr. Gopal Shakya. Photo: UNIC

Kathmandu 23 October 2008: The launch of the UN Youth Advisory Panel in Nepal has been announced today by the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Nepal, Mr. Robert Piper.

The Panel, comprising ten members of various social backgrounds, is expected to increase dialogue and knowledge sharing between the UN system and Nepalis youth as well as improve young people's participation in designing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of UN programmes.

The Panel's establishment demonstrates the high importance the UN Country Team in Nepal (UNCT) places on youth issues. It also recognizes the value of dialogue between young people and the UNCT for an effective implementation of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2008 – 2010 and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Nepal's Three Year Interim Plan refers to young people of 15 to 29 as youth; at 7 million, they constituted more than a quarter of the population. Unemployment among youths is almost double compared to the overall average; this is of particular concern, as youth unemployment and underemployment usually translates into social disintegration.

The UN recognizes a need for social investments in young people to develop tolerance and commitment to peace, justice and human rights. In the current context of structuring 'New Nepal' after the successful completion of Constituent Assembly elections, inclusive participation is extremely important and it is crucial for young people's voices to be heard in framing development agenda and drafting the new constitution.

"Nepal's youth will ultimately be responsible for building the New Nepal" said Robert Piper at the launch ceremony. "They need to be heard as the blue-prints are developed. Their ideas and inputs on how to build a democratic, inclusive and prosperous society are vital. I am very pleased to express our assurance that young people's voices will be heard at the United Nations."

UN News

STAND UP AGAINST POVERTY



UN Staff Stood up Against Poverty at Rose Garden, UN House. Photo: UNIC



Street drama presented by Sarwaname supported by UNDP : Patan Durbar Square. Photo: UNIC



Musical Programme at downtown Kathmandu supported by UNDP, Tudhikhel. Photo: UNIC

Kathmandu 19 October 2008: Kathmandu 19 October 2008: Art of Living Foundation, a social and spiritual organization organized a musical event in an open air theatre in downtown Kathmandu, Tudhikhel. The event was addressed by Nepal's Science and Technology Minister Mr. Ganesh Shah. UN Resident Coordinator Mr. Robert Piper and UN Millennium Development Director Mr. Salil Shetty also addressed the gathering. Renowned spiritual leader of Nepal Pandit Dinbandhu also spoke on the ocassion. More than 4,000 people had gathered in this musical programme.

The programme was also supported by UNDP Nepal. In the event, UN Information Centre distributed Standup Against Poverty T-shirts with imprints of MDGs to some 2,000 people who participated in the event.

200 Households benefited from water plan



Benefited Households at Sundhara. Photo: UN-HABITAT

Denizens in Lalitpur-6 are making their efforts to construct a model water distribution system in Lalitpur, Nepal. The system has been designed to supply drinking water to the local people suffering from chronic water scarcity. The system, after its completion, will tap water from the famous Golden Spout in Lalitpur, popularly known as Sundhara, which discharges 100,000 Litres of water during monsoon and 40,000 Litres in summer every day. The collected water will be then distributed in the community. The proposed water management system is expected to help meet the demand of drinking water in Sundhara area of Lalitpur. Sundhara has also been renovated recently with public contribution.

"200 households in the community will get benefit from the system in its initial phase", said Manoj Chipalu, Chairman of Prabhat Pariwar- a local body representing community people. He told that a 35,000 Litre storage tank will be constructed near the stone spout to collect water from the spout during night. Thus collected water will be then processed and distributed through pipelines laid in the community.

News/Media/Calender

Cooking gas from waste

Kathmandu 12 Oct 2008: Cooking gas plants that generate gas from bio-degradable household waste would be useful in addressing the current fuel crisis and waste disposal problem in the capital. But the technology has largely been ignored. The technology, developed by Phuxin Citizen in China, was introduced in Nepal by a group of engineers some three years ago, according to Prof Dr. Jagannath Shrestha of Center for Energy Studies at Institute of Engineering of Tribhuvan University (CES/IoE/TU) which has tested the technology for over six months. The experiment showed the technology to be cost-effective. "Authorities are busy playing blame game and politics on degradable waste but not initiating any model to solve the problem," said Shrestha.

It costs only Rs. 80,000 to install a 10 feet by 10 feet plant which can generate enough cooking gas to fulfill the needs of a family with 5 to 7 members from only one kg waste in a day. Since it comes with a 25-year guarantee one can recover the cost involved in just three years, says Shrestha. According to CES/IoE/TU, over last the three years, more than 100 individuals from the bureaucracy, private and community institutions, including 12 municipalities, have been given practical training in installing the plant at Kalimati Vegetable and Fruits Market (KVFM) by feeding it the waste generated in the area. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programs of the United Nations Development Program, and UN-Habitat were also involved in the project. In its initial phase, some two-and-half years back, a feasibility study was also conducted by the government and the study showed that this was a practicable option for urban areas. "We have not been able to take any steps ourselves for its promotion yet," said Sammir Thapa, renewable energy support programme coordinator at the Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC), the government body responsible for promoting alternative sources of energy. "But now we have already made a simple understanding to subsidize the promoters of such plants. Soon we will work on it."

"Although, over 70 percent waste in the metropolis areas is bio-degradable, we lacked the space," said Rabin Man Shrestha, chief of the environment department at Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC). "But now we are planning to install a model plant in our premises so that metropolis dwellers can see it and install such plants in their homes." "Managing the disposal of waste used to be such a headache for us but now there is some relief," said Binaya Shrestha, coordinator of the plant installation at KVFM. "As we generate nearly 100 tons of wastes a day, if anybody installs such a plant and needs waste, we will be happy to deliver for free."

UN Events Calendar (November 2008)

November 06: International Day For Preventing The Exploitation Of The Environment In War And Armed Conflict
On 5 November 2001, the General Assembly declared 6 November of each year as the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict (resolution 56/4). In taking this action, it considered that damage to the environment in times of armed conflict impairs ecosystems and natural resources long after the period of conflict, often extending beyond the limits of national territories and the present generation.

November 14: World Diabetes Day
On December 20 2006, the General Assembly passed a resolution (A/RES/61/225) recognizing diabetes as a chronic, debilitating and costly disease. The resolution designates World Diabetes Day as a United Nations Day to be observed every year starting in 2007.

November 16: International Day For Tolerance
In 1996, the General Assembly invited Member States to observe the International Day for Tolerance on 16 November, with activities directed towards both educational establishments and the wider public (resolution 51/95 of 12 December). This action came in the wake of the United Nations Year for Tolerance, 1995, proclaimed by the Assembly in 1993 (resolution 48/126). The Year had been declared on the initiative of the General Conference of UNESCO; on 16 November 1995, the UNESCO member States had adopted the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance and Follow-up Plan of Action for the Year. URL: http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/tolerance

November 20: Africa Industrialization Day
Within the framework of the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa, the General Assembly proclaimed 20 November as Africa Industrialization Day (resolution 44/237 of 22 December 1989). The Day is intended to mobilize the commitment of the international community to the industrialization of Africa.

November 20: Universal Children's Day
By resolution 836(IX) of 14 December 1954, the General Assembly recommended that all countries institute a Universal Children's Day, to be observed as a day of worldwide fraternity and understanding between children. It recommended that the Day was to be observed also as a day of activity devoted to promoting the ideals and objectives of the Charter and the welfare of the children of the world. The date 20 November, marks the day on which the Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, in 1959, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in 1989. URL: http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/children_day

November 21: World Television Day
In 1996, the General Assembly proclaimed 21 November as World Television Day, commemorating the date on which, the first World Television Forum was held at the United Nations. States were invited to observe the Day by encouraging global exchanges of television programmes focusing on issues such as peace, security, economic and social development, and the enhancement of cultural exchanges (Resolution 51/205 of 17 December).

November 25: International Day For The Elimination Of Violence Against Women
By resolution 54/134 of 17 December 1999, the General Assembly designated 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and invited governments, international organizations and NGOs to organize activities designated to raise public awareness of the problem on that day. Women's activists have marked 25 November as a day against violence since 1981. This date came from the brutal assassination in 1960, of the three Mirabal sisters, political activists in the Dominican Republic, on orders of Dominican ruler Rafael Trujillo (1930-1961). URL: http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/violence

November 29: International Day Of Solidarity With The Palestinian People
In 1977, the General Assembly called for the annual observance of 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (resolution 32/40 B). On that day, in 1947, the Assembly adopted the resolution on the partition of Palestine (resolution 181 (II)). URL: http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/palestinian/index.html

UN Resource Materials

UN Nepal

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OCHA
http://www.un.org.np
UNAIDS
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UNCDF
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Comments or Suggestions

United Nations Information Centre | UNIC Kathmandu

United Nations Information Centre
UNIC Kathmandu
P.O. Box No.: 107, UN House,
Pulchowk, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel. Ph. No.: 977 (1) 552 3200
Ext: 1601 / 1603
Fax: 977 (1) 554 3723
Email: unic.np@undp.org
Web Site: http://kathmandu.unic.org

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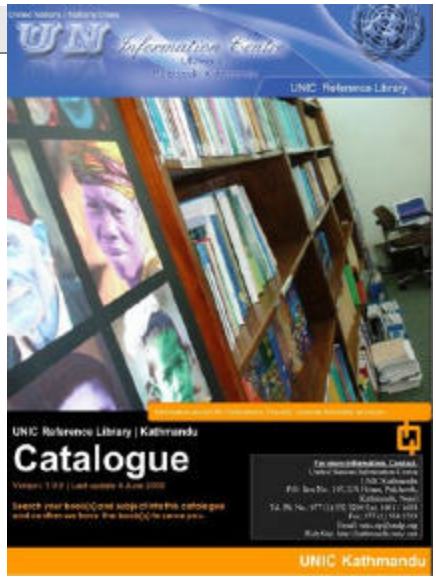


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